

# Entry requirements, skills and interests (ophthalmic and vision science)

You can enter a career in ophthalmic and vision science with A-levels (or equivalent level-3 qualification), after a relevant honours degree or with experience as a registered clinical scientist.

## Entry points and requirements

There are currently three entry points into ophthalmic and vision science:

- [with A-levels or equivalent level-3 qualifications](#)
- [with a relevant degree](#)
- [as an experienced clinical scientist](#)

### With A-levels or equivalent level-3 qualifications

You'll need two or three A2 or A-levels\* including science subjects and a good spread of GCSEs at A-C grade to enter as a healthcare science practitioner through the [NHS Practitioner Training Programme \(PTP\)](#) <sup>[1]</sup> by taking an accredited BSc degree in healthcare science (ophthalmic and vision science).

(\*alternative or equivalent qualifications may be accepted by some universities, but you're advised to check with each university (or visit their website) before making an application).

You can use our [course finder](#) <sup>[2]</sup> to get a list of the universities approved to run it.

### With a relevant degree

You can apply for a place specialising in neurosensory sciences, on the graduate-entry [NHS Scientist Training Programme](#) <sup>[3]</sup> for which you must have a 1st or 2.1 either in an undergraduate honours degree or an integrated master's degree in a pure or applied science subject relevant to the specialism for which you are applying.

If you have a 2.2 honours degree or better in any subject, you will also be considered if you have a higher degree\* that is relevant to the specialism for which you are applying.

(\*Higher degree as defined on [page 17 of The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies](#) [4] Please note this does not include postgraduate diplomas or postgraduate certificates.)

Because of the extensive variation in degrees available it isn't possible to provide a definitive list of relevant degrees for entry to the [STP](#) [5]. For [STP](#) [5] positions in the physiological sciences (which include ophthalmic and vision science), the most commonly accepted degrees will be in [physiology](#) [6], pure or applied physics, engineering, biology, human biology or sports science (if there is significant scientific content).

For all candidates, evidence of research experience (e.g. in the form of a higher degree or equivalent evidence of scientific and academic capability) is considered desirable.

You need to be sure that you've reviewed the job description and person specification for the training (on the [National School of Healthcare Science's website](#) [7]), and the information on this page. You then need to be sure to match the skills and knowledge required to the content of your degree and the specialism you wish to apply for.

For full details of entry requirements for the [STP](#) [5], including qualifications, scientific skills, transferable skills and physical requirements, please see the person specification on the [National School of Healthcare Science's website](#) [8].

### **As an experienced clinical scientist**

With experience as a registered clinical scientist, you can apply for [Higher Specialist Scientist Training \(HSST\)](#) [9].

[Find out more about the training you'll receive and registration for a career in ophthalmic and vision science](#) [10].

## • **Skills, qualities and interests needed**

To work in ophthalmic and vision science, you'll need:

- to show understanding, tolerance and reassurance to patients, eg to be attentive and mindful of the needs of elderly people, in whom many chronic eye conditions occur
- an interest in science and technology, a good academic background and an ability to update and test your knowledge against experience
- good communication skills to be able to liaise with the healthcare team
- to be comfortable using modern technology and complex equipment
- to pay meticulous attention to detail to produce highly accurate work even when under pressure
- to be able to work as part of a team.

If you work in a role with responsibility for resources (such as staff, budgets or equipment) you'll need excellent leadership skills and be able to use your initiative within

the remit of your job role.

If you're applying for a healthcare science role or training position either directly in the NHS or in an organisation that provides NHS services you'll be asked to show how you think the NHS values apply in your everyday work. The same will be true if you're applying for a university course funded by the NHS.

The NHS values form a key part of the [NHS Constitution](#) [11].

[Find out more about the NHS Constitution](#) [12].

---

**Source URL:**<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/physiological-sciences/ophthalmic-and-vision-science/entry-requirements-skills-and-interests>

### Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university/studying-healthcare-science> [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/looking-course> [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/study-and-training/graduate-training-opportunities/nhs-scientist-training-programme> [4] <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks.pdf> [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#STP> [6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Physiology> [7] <http://www.nshcs.hee.nhs.uk/> [8] <http://www.nshcs.hee.nhs.uk/join-programme/nhs-scientist-training-programme/important-documents> [9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/working-health/nhs-higher-specialist-scientific-training> [10] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/physiological-sciences/ophthalmic-and-vision-science/training-development-and> [11] [https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#NHS\\_Constitution](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#NHS_Constitution) [12] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/working-health/nhs-constitution>